

Kalyana-Kalpataru

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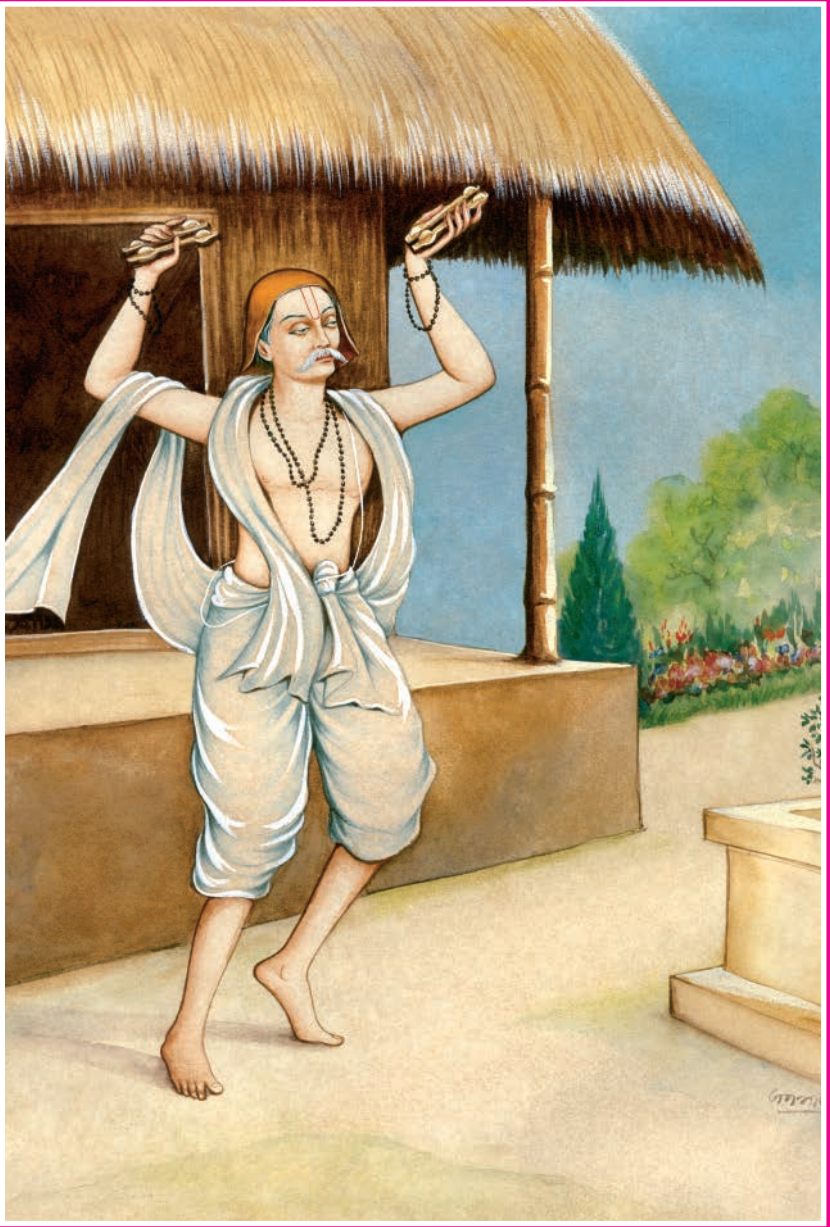


Śrī Māruti

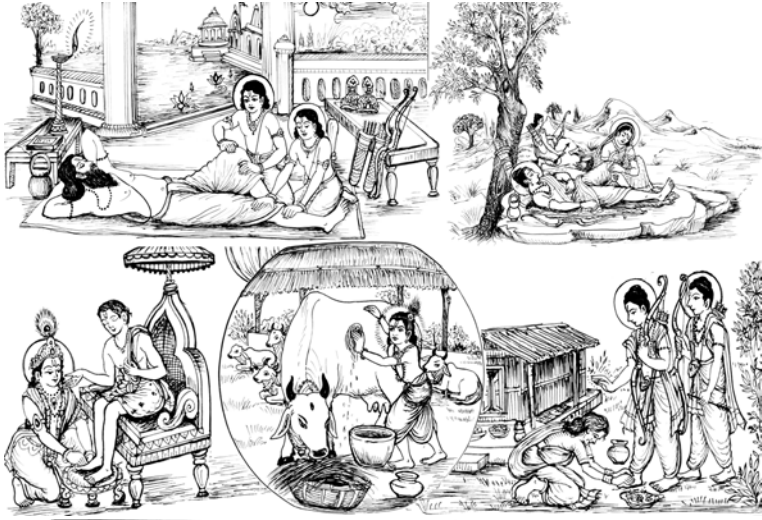
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ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

A MONTHLY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL
IDEAS AND LOVE FOR GOD

Vol. 63

January 2018

No. 4

Subhāṣitam

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके सुखिनौ न कदाचन ।

यश्चाधनः कामयते यश्च कुप्यत्यनीश्वरः ॥

These two people are never happy in this world, one who is a pauper but is full of desires and the other who has no authority but is full of anger.

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C O N T E N T S

1. Subhāṣitam	3
2. Who can Redeem Others? — <i>Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka</i>	5
3. How to Deal with Others — <i>Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar</i>	.....	9
4. Importance of the Objective — <i>Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas</i>	.....	13
5. Living in the Present— <i>Madan Mohan Varma</i>	.....	15
6. Glory of Saint Jñānadeva— <i>Radha Baba</i>	.....	19
7. Sow the Spiritual Seed in Youth— <i>Swami Sivananda</i>	.....	21
8. Adorable Nature— <i>Chilukuri Venkateswarlu</i>	.....	23
9. The Inscrutable Mind— <i>Dr. M. S. Manhas</i>	.....	24
10. Perfect Love For God— <i>Swami Krishnananda</i>	.....	29
11. Arjuna as a Bhakta: A Role Model — <i>Dr. Sudesh Chander Sharma</i>	.....	33
12. Read and Digest	.....	36
13. Rāma Rāva, A Beneficent Boy	.....	37
14. Lord comes to Kabīra— <i>Nabaji Siddha</i>	.....	38
15. O'Pride! Leave Me Alone— <i>Dr. Suresh Chandra Pande</i>	.....	43
16. Perfection of Soul— <i>Swami Vivekananda</i>	.....	45
17. Methods of Mind-Control— <i>Sree Rama Devi</i>	.....	50
18. The Purpose of Life— <i>Ravi Sharma</i>	.....	56
19. Be Free from Vāṇī Doṣa — <i>Swami Akhandananda Saraswati</i>	60
20. Dear Contributors	65

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Who can Redeem Others?

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

Once there was a king. A learned *Brāhmaṇa* visited him. He daily related to the king some stories. That way a number of years passed. One day the king said to the *Brāhmaṇa*—“Sire, a number of years have elapsed since you started relating such stories. Today you related me a story, similar ones you daily relate to me. Resorting to this practice both of us have grown up old. But even today I am what I used to be many years ago. Three to four thousand rupees are spent for this purpose every year. This adversely affects the government treasury. Should this expenditure go waste or it should be of some benefit to me. Both of us waste our time besides the money that is spent for the purpose. Tell me why no spiritual elevation is there? I listen to what you say. You talk of dispassion, devotion and knowledge but in spite of listening to you I neither became a devotee nor an enlightened one, nor virtuous, nor a *Yogī*. Answer decisively within a month. If you fail to give the answer the recitation of ‘*Kathā*’ will come to a close and the payment of your wages will be stopped, you will have to find out some other means of earning your livelihood. The *Brāhmaṇa* was stunned to hear this. The learned *Brāhmaṇa* began to reflect what reply he should give to the king. When the learned *Brāhmaṇa* was lost in anxious thoughts, he met on the way a *Mahātmā*—a great soul in the true sense. He practised dispassion and self-denial and had sense of renunciation at heart. He was indeed a great man of a very high order.

Seeing the sadness on the *Brāhmaṇa*'s face, he asked the *Brāhmaṇa* what the matter with him was. The learned *Brāhmaṇa* said—"The fact is that I am going to lose my livelihood after a month. When the *Mahātmā* enquired the reason thereof, he told him that he could not answer the question asked by the king. The question is "Why is it so that no trace of dispassion, knowledge and devotion is visible in him in spite of the fact that I preach to him daily on matters of knowledge, devotion and dispassion and he listens to me." He has warned to stop the expenditure incurred by him in this respect in case I fail to answer his question satisfactorily. The *Mahātmā* said—"Why are you worried about it? I shall answer the question asked." The learned *Brāhmaṇa* said—"I shall be rather loser if you answer the question. I mean it will be humiliating for me in the sense that I myself could not answer the question, it is answered by this sage. (They would say). The *Mahātmā* said—"No, it won't be humiliating for you. You should inform the king that it was an ordinary matter and even my disciples could answer the question and I shall become one. Since I shall appear as your disciple and answer the question, it will not be against your interest, I suppose. The *Brāhmaṇa* accepted that such arrangement will not be prejudicial to his interest. The learned *Brāhmaṇa* approached the king the next day. The king then asked—Sire, are you ready to answer the question? The *Brāhmaṇa* said—"Your Majesty, it is but an ordinary matter, I have a number of disciples and any one can answer the question. The king said—"I want the answer, it matters little whether you answer the question or your disciple. You can bring your disciple tomorrow, if you please." The next day the *Brāhmaṇa* approached the king with the sage and the sage following the *Brāhmaṇa* like a disciple. The king asked

him if he (the sage) was his disciple. He replied politely in the affirmative. The king enquired if he knew what his question was—The *Mahātmā* said—“Yes, I know it. Your question is why is it that although about thirty years have passed in listening to the discourses on the subjects of knowledge, dispassion and devotion, still it had no effect on you?” The king said—“That’s it.” The disciple said—“I can answer your question provided you hand-over to me the entire power and authority for an hour and instruct them to carry out my orders.” Just after ascending the throne he ordered that the *Brāhmaṇa* should be tied up with strings. He further ordered that the king too should be tied with strings. In compliance with the order the king was also tied. Both were at a loss to know what was being done to them. Then the *Mahātmā* said to the *Brāhmaṇa* that he had been telling the king legendary stories for a very long time and on its basis he should request the king to get the strings unfastened. The *Brāhmaṇa* requested the king to get his strings unfastened but the king expressed his inability to do so. The *Brāhmaṇa* said that in such a state he himself should do the job. The king said that as he himself was tied he could not unfasten him. Then he requested the king to get the work done through some other means but the king replied that he could not get him unfastened for his order carried no weight and added that his orders are not carried out nor his hands were free to do the job. The *Mahātmā* said to the king that you have listened to the discourses from the *Brāhmaṇa* for so many years, you request the *Brāhmaṇa* to unfasten you. *Brāhmaṇa* replied that he himself was bound. How can he unfasten him? Now the *Mahātmā* asks the king whether his question has been answered or not. The king replied that he did not follow him. He further asked—“Don’t you follow me,

even now? How can one who is himself tied make others free? If you can't break your own bondage how can you set others free?" The king said—"I do understand you now." Then he asked the *Brāhmaṇa* if he could follow what he had stated and whether he could make others free, when he himself was tied. And when he replied that he could not do so. *Mahātmā* said to the king, your Majesty, this *Brāhmaṇa* certainly narrates to you, gives you discourses everyday, but he himself is under bondage. Though he himself is enmeshed in worldly coils and you expect him to set you free from bondage. Had the *Brāhmaṇa* himself attained deliverance, he could help you attain deliverance. One cannot attain deliverance only through narrating mythological stories. The parrots and the Mainās go on repeating 'Rādhe Kṛṣṇa.' They do not understand why they repeat 'Rādhe Kṛṣṇa.' When the cat comes up and tries to catch them instead of saying 'Rādhe Kṛṣṇa,' as usual they talk like birds. The same is the case with the *Brāhmaṇa*. How can then the *Brāhmaṇa* help you attain deliverance. A person who himself has lost attachment with the world can bring about a change in others and those who are attached to the world and crave for comforts, luxuries and enjoyments can never be able to bring about deliverance for others. Only such a person can do so who has developed keen dispassion from the world—a person of exalted soul who has developed not only dispassion but also unconcernedness and is possessed of the knowledge of the Supreme Being.



How to Deal with Others

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

The Self is an eternal and inseparable portion of the Supreme Being and is of the same nature as the Supreme Being. But so long as it is seated in Nature, it is called the *Jivātmā*, the embodied spirit, and so long has it to experience the *Guṇas* born of *Prakṛti*, and through attachment with those *Guṇas* has to pass into good and evil births of various kinds. Though attached, actionless, eternal and blissful by nature, it has to experience pleasure and pain because of its being seated in Nature. Disowning your identity with Nature identify yourself with the One self-existing, blissful, all-pervading, imperishable Self and disengaging yourself from all entrappings of the modes of Nature, attain to the blissful state of oneness with Brahma (the Universal Spirit) which is beyond the duality of pleasure and pain and which is free from all evil.

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Remember that the self-same principle which, when seated in body is known as the *Jivātmā* (the embodied soul) and experiences pleasure and pain is the seeing witness, when seated in the heart; is also the consentor in so far as it gives us the right lead from within; it is also the supporter because it sustains and preserves the body as well as the universe; it is the Lord of creation inasmuch as it regulates us all and as the one attributeless existence, it is *Paramātmā* (the Oversoul). All these aspects exist at one and the same time in one and the same Lord; it is the diversity of function which makes them appear as different. This is His ineffable *Līlā* (sport).

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This Integral Supreme has, in the main, two eternal aspects: the one is unmanifest and the other, manifest. The unmanifest, again, is of two kinds: that which is devoid of qualities (*Nirguṇa*) and that which is qualified (*Saguṇa*). The unmanifest *Nirguṇa* is the state in which the Divine Energy does not function, is merged in the Divine. This state is known by the name of *Brahma* which is a compact mass of Knowledge and Bliss. The unmanifest *Saguṇa* is the Creator of the universe, all-pervading and governing all from within as the Lord. The Self (*Ātmā*), the embodied soul (*Jīvātmā*), the seer, the consentor, the sustainer and the enjoyer—all these are the different states of existence of this unmanifest *Saguṇa*. It is only when the Divine Energy comes into play that the unmanifest is called *Saguṇa*. The same *Paramātmā* is eternally manifest in His divine Form. Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and others are His *Avatāra* Forms while Viṣṇu, Śiva, Devī, Brahmā, Sūrya (the Sun-god) and others are His celestial Forms. Do not regard these Forms as separate in their manifestation or in their essential nature. The same Lord is both unmanifest and manifest and it is his manifest aspect which reveals itself in various forms for the sake of *Līlā*. Have absolute faith in and single-minded devotion to the form that is dear to you. All other forms, you have to dissolve into the same and see and hear of it everywhere, at every time and in every way. If you cannot dissolve them in this way, you should look upon them as so many forms of your own Sportive Lord. Rest assured that one who adores any of the manifest forms of the Lord—who is Omnipresent and Omnipotent, nay, who is the Soul and Support of all and who is All in all with Absolute love and supreme faith, regarding that Form to be the Supreme Deity and he who adores the eternal attributeless, self-existing and all-blissful

Supreme identifying himself with Him, both of these, the devotee and the knower, will ultimately reach the same Divine Truth. For the Divine is one. Of course the single-minded devotee who adores the sportive and manifest Form of the Divine and whom the *Gītā* declares as having the most intimate knowledge of *Yoga* (union with the Divine), has the greater advantage in that he has also the privilege to taste that rarest sweetness of Love which the most devoted lover of the Divine only knows and experiences.

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Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the eternal manifestations of the Supreme Deity. Do not treat them lightly, taking them to be ordinary mortals. They are not liable to birth and death like ordinary human beings. They only manifest themselves or appear in this world and disappear. Do not allow yourself to be led away by those who, not knowing their transcendent character as the unborn and imperishable, Supreme Lord of all, think of them as if they were ordinary mortals. And with supreme faith adore any one of these divine manifestations and meditate thereon according to your predilection. The *Yogamāyā* of the Supreme Divine is very powerful. The Lord puts on the veil of this *Yogamāyā* when appearing in this world and hence we deluded people, not recognizing the unborn and imperishable Divine Self, consider the transcendent forms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma as human forms bound by the lower nature. Remember, he alone can cross this imperishable divine *Māyā* (power of illusion) who surrenders himself to the Lord of *Māyā*, the Divine Himself. Therefore, make no distinction between the unmanifest and the manifest, the *Nirguṇa* and the *Saguṇa* and giving up all quarrel and useless wrangling, love and adore the Divine.

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Adore the Unmanifest or the Manifest, whomsoever you like; but one thing is necessary in both the cases that viz., your dealing with everyone must be of the right kind. In the eye of him who adores the unmanifest, all is *Brahma*; while in the eye of the worshipper of the Manifest Divine, the whole world is a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Rāma. Both come to the same thing. Look upon all as *Brahma* and yourself as identical with them and deal with all in the spirit of that oneness, allowing differences where they are necessary. Or if you will, recognize all as so many images of Śrī Rāma or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and serve them according to the role assigned to you by Śrī Rāma or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Remember, the best service one can render to others is through actions enjoined on him by the *Śāstras*. This is the ideal to be followed by all seekers. As to what the liberated souls should do is known to them alone.



Body is only a container. Precious things are there in it, bad things are also there. At the deepest level the divine spark is hidden within this body. That is the value of this body. It has infinite value, like a box containing a very costly gem; the box is ordinary, but it contains a profound gem, it has high value. So also is the human body is called *Kṣetra*.

—Swami Ranganathananda

Importance of the Objective

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

If there is a temple on a hill, the pilgrims reach there by taking the road up, but a forest-dweller may take a short-cut straight to the temple, so an aspirant does not attain his divine objective quickly after listening, thinking and practising. But with a firm resolve, even a simple person could achieve his goal soon. It would mean that an objective has much more power than mere practice and if a person strongly wills for an objective, he would be successful. If he cannot set after an objective, however much he might study, concentrate or meditate and experience trance, he would not attain God, because study or practice is not of such importance, as an objective is. In effect, the importance of objective, is much higher than even that of trance.

As stated earlier, the value of action in this regard, is just one paisa. Meditation, contemplation, bodily purification, pilgrimage, austerity, fasting etc., do not result in the achievement of divinity. A tape-recorder, could play a chant of the Lord's holy name (*Japa*) for eight hours, still it would not attain God. Only they succeed, who have a firm objective. If a sweeper sweeps with the objective of serving others and removing their unhappiness, he will attain divinity. An idiot, who knows nothing, but firmly believes that he is of God and God is his, will attain the same Lord, Whom the most exalted souls attain. Therefore, an aspirant should form the only aim of his life that he has to attain

God. Beside it, he has no desire to do, know or receive anything else. He who has decided the objective, with or without fear or favour, he will not change his objective. A crow flying over the sea, comes down only on a ship to perch itself and not on water lest it be drowned. Similarly, any person whose object is to achieve God, would not go from place to place, but would stick to the place where he could get proper guidance to attain the goal of human life viz., God-realization.



One attains God through *Japa*. By repeating the name of God secretly and in solitude one receives divine grace. Then comes His vision. Suppose there is a big piece of timber under water fastened to the land with a chain; by proceeding along the chain link by link, you will at last touch the timber.

“Higher than worship is *Japa*, higher than *Japa* is meditation, higher than meditation is *Bhāva* and higher than *Bhāva* are *Mahābhāva* and *Prema*. Caitanyadeva had *Prema*. When one attains *Prema*, one has the rope to tie God.”

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Living in the Present

—*Madan Mohan Varma*

One of the major ironies of our living is that we seldom live in the present. If we reflect deeply, we would find that the dead weight of the past on the one hand and dreams of the future on the other, completely overwhelm and suffocate the present in which we should live.

Indeed, the mystery of the present, which is life, remain hidden from us and our minds remain impure because we continuously feed on the shadows of the past and of the future. The atom of the psychic world remains wrapped in the coverings of the past and the future. The splitting of this atom would release Life and Love.

This may sound mystic and abstruse. But let the *Sādhaka* ponder over it. Whatever we think about ourselves or about our course of action, we do it on the basis of the past or on the hopes of the future. We profess that our present situation is like this or that; but that hardly relates to the present. Even when we show yearning for self-realisation in the present, there remains hidden in our thoughts the hope of self-realisation at some future time. Self-realisation, however, is an issue of the here-and now; and whenever it comes, it will come by facing the present, never by indulging in thoughts of the past or of the future.

The *Sādhaka*, therefore, should, in the deeper recesses of his heart, dissociate himself from and turn his back on, all past incidents; and should not indulge in day-dreams of the future. He should live fully in the present. He should think over what his real want is, what he has in the present

and what he is doing. A full awareness of any of these three things will result in an awareness of all the three.

What has one got in the present and does it evoke his love? Or if it does not evoke his love, does he renounce it or not? The mind will be purified either way. But in most cases we neither love what appears to us as life, nor renounce it. We go on spurning what we have and desiring what we do not have. There are only two alternative courses before the *Sādhaka*: either to make the best use of what he has of objects, talents and power—which should be enriched by being put to the best use or to detach himself completely from all these and abide in the peace of detachment. Either course will make the mind pure.

We evade sorrow by invoking pleasure. As a result, happiness continually evades us and an invocation of pleasures and indulgence therein, releases fresh sorrow. If we face sorrow with our whole being, greet it as a messenger of Truth and pause to receive its message, it will depart, yielding place to *Ānanda*, whose message it brings in its own way but which we constantly spurn. The message of *Ānanda*, which is sought to be delivered by sorrow, its messenger, is that we must not be deceived by pleasures which masquerade as happiness but whose content is sorrow. The force of *Ānanda* constantly unmask the deceit of fleeting pleasures and brings out and exposes them by bringing out sorrow in its nakedness. But few realise the hidden purpose and message of sorrow and we go on evading the same by invoking and indulging in fresh pleasures and sorrow a new. Pleasures continually disown us, but we never disown pleasures, even though each time we invoke pleasures, sorrow appears. We know from experience that there is no pleasure without pain in its wake and yet we go on invoking pleasure. If only we face sorrow

without reserve and with love, that very moment it would tell us 'Now I go, never to return.'

The way to face sorrow is to forget all about the past and about the future. Then you will make the best use of the present. If anything comes in your way, you will make the best use of it. If any individual engages your mind, you will then render whatever service you can to him and thereby be detached from him; and whatever be the circumstances, you will make the best use of them. By thus, making the best use of the objects and circumstances, which appear before you, you will be relieved of them and will be faced with the present: life and love. Life and love will first appear before you as a quest or a yearning. True quest for truth and yearning for the divine, are not a matter of slow practice, but come of themselves in the very present the moment you have redeemed your debt to the fleeting by making the best use of it and by service. Quest and yearning are the surest path of realisation, for they are the reflections of a pure mind.

So, for the *Sādhaka* the present is either a quest for the One or a yearning for the One or the realisation of the One. Nothing fourth can really be a thing of the present. All else is an echo of the past or a fantasy of the future-reflections of an impure mind. Yearning for the Divine is a matter of realisation of kinship with the Divine, not with objects or individuals.

Therefore, the *Sādhaka* has to make the best use of objects and circumstances or to dissociate from them. The former is meant to help the *Sādhaka* at the level of action and the latter at the level of knowledge. So, the *Sādhaka* is either engaged in the service of others by making the best use of everything he has or he abides in peace by rising above them. The former engenders love, the latter

brings about unity. For the work of the former, because they are based on the relationship with the Lord of all work, dissolves in love by merging the worker in Him whose worship all his work becomes. Work is only a *Sāadhanā*, not the goal.

The *Sādhaka* should forget all past incidents and retain only the wisdom distilled out of the same. We generally keep the incidents stored in the mind, never pausing to distil the wisdom or experience therefrom, whereby the mind becomes impure. From this standpoint, constant thought of objects of desire is much worse than even their indulgence.

Live in the present only, therefore and love it.



Keep yourself ready to help others and find happiness in giving happiness to whoever crosses your path. Do not think of it as having to practise unselfishness. That makes it seem something hard to do. Rather feel that you are doing it for your own pleasure—the joy you find in removing the unhappiness of others, physically, mentally or spiritually.

—*Journey to Self-Realization*

Glory of Saint Jñānadeva

—Radha Baba

God-realization is something of a very high degree. If someone can make a tiger, lion, deer and goat sit together, it cannot be assumed that the man capable of doing so is a God-realized soul, because such things are of a very trivial and inferior character altogether. Even the circus people can control the animals after training them. God-realized souls alone know what God-realization really is. An ordinary worldly man looks at the miracles one can perform, but to perform miracles is not a sign of God-realization. In South India there was a saint by name Jñānadeva. A contemporary of his was *Yogī Cāṅgadeva*, who used to ride a lion. He was aged fourteen hundred years. Every hundred years when the time to die came, he used to sit in *Samādhi* through the power of his *Yoga* and get a fresh lease of life for another hundred years. Such was his power. Jñānadeva had a brother and a sister too. All of them were God-realized souls. The news about them reached Cāṅgadeva and many persons used to praise them. Cāṅgadeva was full of conceit. Mounting his lion he proceeded to meet him. People usually see only the external things and exclaim, 'Oh dear! What a high-souled person he is—that he is riding a lion.' The people said, 'Respected Jñānadeva! A very high-souled person is coming to meet you. Please come along.' Jñānadeva thought to himself, 'Well, wait and see.' At that time all the three—the two brothers and sister—were sitting on a damaged wall and talking about the Lord. When the people told him repeatedly,

‘Revered Sir! A very high-souled person is coming, please come forward to welcome him.’ Thereupon Jñānadeva said, ‘All right’ and then addressed the wall, ‘O wall! Move forward.’ Hardly had he spoken thus, the wall tore itself away from the ground and began to move. Jñānadeva said, ‘Oh dear! Uptil now through my Yogic power I could only make animate objects dance according to my will, but this man can control even inanimate objects!’ That very moment his pride was humbled and he fell down at Jñānadeva’s feet. Just then Jñānadeva instructed him by reciting sixty-four songs (*Abhaṅgas*) and described to him the glory of *Rāma-Nāma*, adding that all these things were nothing as compared with the Divine Name. Later his younger sister initiated him (*Cāṅgadeva*) and then he was able to realize God.



The awareness and conviction that fire exists in wood, is *Jñāna*, knowledge. But to cook rice on that fire, eat the rice and get nourishment from it is *Vijñāna*. To know by one’s inner experience that God exists, is *Jñāna*. But to talk to Him, to enjoy Him as child, as friend, as Master, as beloved is *Vijñāna*. The realization that God has become the universe and all living beings is *Vijñāna*.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Sow the Spiritual Seed in Youth

—Swami Sivananda

Devotion has absolutely nothing to do with age, caste, position or rank or sex. Generally men of the world say, “We will practise *Dhyāna*, devotion, etc., when we retire from services.” This is a serious mistake. How can you do serious spiritual *Sādhanā* after all your energy is squeezed out in service, etc.? You can hardly sit even for fifteen minutes. You have not got the strength to discipline your *Indriyas*. The spiritual seed of devotion must be sown in your heart when you are young, when your heart is tender and untainted. Then only it will strike a deep root, blossom and bear fruit when you become old, when you retire from service. Then only you will not be afraid of the God of death—Yama. You will meet him with a smile.

Foolish parents do not allow their sons who have devotional temperaments to do any sort of spiritual practices at home. They put serious obstacles in their ways. They are afraid that they will leave their houses and take to *Samnyāsa*. If they read *Gītā* or any other religious book, their parents prevent them from doing so. What a shame? A young advocate of Lahore told me that his father prevents him from going to Haridwar even. Such is the condition of grown-up parents, who crush the devotional growth of their sons. How deplorable is the state of affairs? They get them married when they are in their teens just to tickle their nerves and spoil their lives and future.

For all beings a human birth is difficult to obtain, more so is a male body rarer than that is Brahminhood rare still

is the attachment to spiritual path and still more rare is realisation. There are three things which are rare indeed and which are due to the grace of God, viz., a human birth, the longing for *Darśana* of Hari and the protecting care of a realized *Bhāgavata*. The man having by some means obtained human birth with a male body and with mastery of the *Vedas* in addition, is foolish enough not to exert for God-realisation and verily commits suicide; for he kills himself by clinging to things unreal. What greater fool is there than the man who having obtained a rare human body and a masculine body too, neglects to achieve the real end of this life? Let people quote scriptures, let them wander about the world visiting the four *Dhāmas* (Badrīnārāyaṇa, Dwārakā, Purī and Rāmeśwara) with a single Koupeen, there is no liberation for anyone without the direct *Darśana* of Hari. There is no hope of immortality by means of riches. Therefore, the man of understanding and faith should strive his best for God-realization having renounced his desire for pleasures from external objects, duty approaching a good, generous, realised *Bhāgavata* and fixing his mind at the lotus-feet of Hari!



Let your heart hunger for God, as it has never hungered before. We have spent incarnations wandering down the pathways of desires—for name, fame, glory—for all the things of mundane worth this life has to offer.

—*Sri Daya Mata*

Adorable Nature

—*Chilukuri Venkateswarlu*

The Creator of universe is adorable,
The whole creation is adorable;
All the planets are for worship,
They are helpful to all, with friendship;
The animals like cow are great Pedagogues,
They teach us to be gentle even before foes;
The rivers from mountain beds bring purity,
The dip in rivers grants chastity;
The trees like neem are praiseworthy,
They exist to give solace and keep us healthy;
The pious people are embodiments of God,
The whole universe bows before them, withal.

What not, the whole Nature is adorable,
The man that perceives God in Nature is admirable.



The Inscrutable Mind

—*Dr. M. S. Manhas*

The body and mind are inseparably linked together in all human beings. There is no difficulty in defining the nature and functions of the human body. It is a material object that can be perceived through the senses and analyzed with the help of modern instrumentation. It has been extensively studied from philosophical, scientific and spiritual angles. Therefore, we know its inner and outer structure with great precision. It is made of bones, muscles, arteries, veins, glands and several other vital organs. Besides these, there are other internal supporting systems like digestive, respiratory, circulatory, neural, etc., which sustain its existence. All this is nicely packaged in a sheet of fine leather, called skin.

People, however, disagree about the best way to define mind. We only know what it does, but its precise nature and the locus of its operations is still a mystery. In olden days it was associated with the heart but now it is linked with the brain. This linkage with the brain could be disputed on several grounds. An absent-minded person will not perceive an object even when looking at it.

Mind is not a discreet organ in the body that can be analyzed. Scientists and thinkers of all shades including philosophers, psychologists, theologians and even computer experts have contributed to our knowledge of the mind. Experts, however, continue to disagree about exactly what it is. There is general consensus that all living beings, which possess nervous system, have a mind.

Mind enables human beings to make decisions about their survival and appropriately react to the external stimuli. Mind is also involved in thoughts, feelings, remembering, considering, reasoning, evaluating and deciding. In short, mind reflects the personality and enables human beings to lead a progressive, honourable and communal life.

The Vedantic View—

The role and nature of mind has been the subject of much speculation amongst the thinkers of the past. We find its mention in the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas* and other Hindu scriptures. *Vedānta* says that mind is one of the three manifestations of the Supreme Reality, which ultimately led to the creation of the universe. These manifestations are: matter, energy and mind. The subtle nature of these three increases in the order in which they are listed, mind being the most subtle. *Sāṅkhya Yogīs* postulate that mind evolves from ego. *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* (III. 4. 43) believes that *Sañkalpa* (imagination, will, thought) is the mind. It is not different from imagination as water is not different from liquidity or motion from air. Wherever there is imagination, there exists the mind. They are an inseparable pair. They are not different at any time. Another way to define the mind is that it is an impure outward movement of pure consciousness, which is devoid of any stain inside (*ibid.*, III. 96.41). There are as many minds as there are living beings and each of them behaves independently. The conjunction of mind with the body lasts as long as there is life in the body.

The mode of operation of the mind as a vehicle for generating desires (pure and impure) has been meticulously analyzed by the Vedantists. According to them, the sense-organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin) interact with the sense objects (the phenomenal world). The mind passes on

this information to the intellect, which decides the appropriate course of action. This decision ultimately reaches the action organs (hands, feet, vocal cord, organs of evacuation and generation) for execution. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1. 3. 3-4) has explained this operation through an analogy of a chariot driver. It says—

“Know that soul (self) is the master of the chariot and body is the chariot. Know also that intellect (*Buddhi*) is the charioteer and mind is the bridle. They call the sense-organs as the horses and the (sense) objects as the roads. The people with discriminating knowledge call the Self as the enjoyer when it is associated with the body, organs and the mind.”

Through this imagery, the *Upaniṣad* has depicted the human body as a chariot, which is moving forward to reach the Goal (destination, perfection). The owner of this chariot, who is enjoying the ride, is the Self (soul) that is associated with body, sense-organs and the mind. The driver of this chariot is the intellect, which controls the bridle (mind). The sense-organs are the horses that are yoked to the chariot and the sense objects are the roads. This chariot is being driven by the intellect to reach the destination.

To reach the destination, it is necessary that the horses are under complete control of the driver (purified intellect). Greener pastures (sense objects) along the way can entice the horses (sense-organs) and impede the smooth onward movement of the chariot. This necessitates a firm control of the horses by the driver (intellect), who has the bridle (mind) in his hands. If the driver is lax, inattentive or incompetent and does not know how to firmly control the horses, the horses may bolt and even topple the chariot. Under these circumstances the ride will end in disaster. In other words, the mind, intellect and sense-organs have to

funcion in unison. This is necessary to overcome hindrances caused by sense objects in the form of mundane desires.

Mind is of a very fickle nature. Like a monkey it never stays still at one place, but jumps from one idea to another without any limitation of space or speed. It is active both in waking and dream states. A Hindi poet has aptly described the unsteady nature of the mind in the following verse:

*Mana lobhī mana lālacī mana cañcala mana cora,
Mana ke vaśa na Jāiye palaka palaka kachu aura.*

“Mind is avaricious, mind is greedy, mind is fickle and mind is a thief. Do not follow the dictates of the mind, because it changes (its course) moment by moment.”

Yogasūtra of R̥ṣi Patañjali is primarily devoted to the control of the restless mind, which can help the practitioner to achieve union with the Lord. Only a controlled mind can be channelled to achieve excellence in this world and the next. The mind, however, can be controlled by the mind itself. No amount of religious austerities can help unless one is fully committed to succeed in this mission. Patañjali suggests the practice of *Yoga* to achieve this. An absolute control of the mind is called *Manonāśa* (destruction of the mind). The destruction of the mind here implies that it is totally under the control of the practitioner and cannot veer away at will in the dark alleys of desire, ego, anger, attachment, aversion, love, hate, friendship, enmity, etc. These infirmities of the mind cause delusion, pain and suffering. Mastery in the science of meditation, which is one of the eight limbs of *Yoga* is necessary for mind control. It is suggested that meditation must be practised regularly for life, even after one has achieved success in the subjugation of mind. This is necessary to be sure that the firm grip on the mind by the *Yogī* is not loosened inadvertently.

* Among the senses I (*Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa) am the mind

and among the living beings I am the consciousness (*Gītā* X. 22) (This shows the importance of mind).

* O son of Kuntī (Arjuna), the turbulent senses violently carry away the mind of even a wise person, who is striving for liberation (*Ibid.* II. 60).

* Restraining whatever causes the restless and unsteady mind to waver let him (the practitioner) bring it under control of the Self alone (*Ibid.* V. 26).

* May my mind that abides in the heart, most swift and active, resolve on what is good (*Yajur Veda.* XXXIV. 54. 6).

* Mind should be controlled to such an extent that it gets merged in the heart. This is *Jñāna* (wisdom) and this is *Dhyāna* (meditation). The rest is mere argumentation and verbosity (*Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, 5).



Most people are not awakened to the fact that God Himself is what they truly want—first and last. “Bread the men of the world seek after; but seek ye first the kingdom of God.” ‘Bread’ means the pleasures and desires for things of the earth for which people pray; but you who are wise, seek God first and all things else will come to you.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

Perfect Love For God

—*Swami Krishnananda*

In mortal affection—human love of persons and things in the world—there is an expectation from the object of love. Unexpected, total affection is not seen in this world. When I love you, I expect you to love me also in some way. It is not that I unilaterally love you, whatever be your behaviour. That is not seen. If there is a give-and-take commercial policy in affection, naturally it ends in tragedy, bereavement. Can you love anything unconditionally—let that do anything, let it be anything, in whatever way? Have you seen such affection in this world? No. The partners in affection can separate on the slightest of suspicions and doubts arisen between themselves in their relationship. This can happen everywhere—in the office, in the family and in everyway of your life. Bereavement is the necessary consequence of worldly love. But, love being an essential ingredient in one's nature, it cannot be set aside. Though it does not work well in this world, it has to work somehow, as in the case of your activities in the world. Though every action has a defect, you have to act somehow by freeing it from the limitations that may be imposed upon it.

Though every love in the world is defective, it has to be there somehow. You cannot exist without it. In a morbid form of affection which finds that everything that is its object of affection is lost, it turns itself upon itself and becomes narcissistic love. You love your own self, afterwards. You become a maniac of self-love—a megalomaniac, sometimes.

It is a great art to turn the affections of human circumstance to God. I mentioned to you to choose one

form of your affection which will be turned towards God. “Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come...” is one form of prayer. Usually religions consider God as a father, for whatever reason. Sometimes God is considered as a mother also, especially in Indian circles. God as mother, God as father. Sometimes God is treated as a brother-companion-friend, as in the case of Arjuna who had the companionship of *Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, whom he knew as divine and yet he was a colleague and a friend—an equal, as it were. How will you turn your love to God?

All aspects of love should come together into a focus of single attention in the case of love of God. When such a thing becomes difficult at the outset, people take to one side of affection and become devotees of God in terms of ordinary worldly relations, chosen one by one or all together or only one at a time. Bhīṣma of the *Mahābhārata* is said to have had the attitude of a son of the Supreme Father in respect of God. He was a philosopher, so he philosophically conceived the Supreme Being as his original Source, the Parent of all things. Hanumān is reputed for his *Dāsa Bhakti*, love manifested in a servant towards his master. Mother Yaśodā, renowned in history as the mother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was fond of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a baby. Prahāda also considered God a parent and accorded him such affection. Arjuna’s love is an example of the love of companionship—friend to friend. In the case of the *Gopīs* of Vrindavan, it was an apex of affection. Affection becomes complete and it reaches its climax when the lover loses his self-consciousness. As long as you are existing as a lover, your ego is also preponderating at the same time. In an intense form of love, the lover loses consciousness of oneself and merges into the consciousness of that which

is loved. The lover becomes the beloved. The *Gopīs* had this experience. They hugged a tree, embraced a dry stick, kissed a leaf. They could visualise their beloved in all these things when they found that they could not actually, physically, see their beloved.

Śrī Rāma had that experience, as we have it in the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*, especially when he lost Sītā. He cried, wept and ran hither and thither asking, “Where is my beloved?”—asking the trees, asking the twigs, asking the leaves, asking the animals, “Have you seen my wife?” It was Rāma’s experience in the wilderness; so was also the *Gopīs*.

This is *Mādhurya Bhāva*—love which is sweet in its nature, which is apart from the logical love of the master and servant, the love of friend and friend, etc. They become, in this form of ecstasy of sweetness of love, commensurate with all creation, practically. They become *Sahaja*, as it is called in *Vaiṣṇava* theology. *Sahaja Mārga* is a form of devotion to God where you become equal to the object of love. We do not actually become the lover of the object; we ourselves assume the role of the object of affection, so that we do not know whether the two mingle as two distinct things or one looks like two things. We do not know, in the *Sahajāvasthā*, whether it is the beloved loving the lover or the lover loving the beloved. If water in two tanks is on par on the surface level, we do not know which water moves to which tank. There is a pair of companion-tanks in Vrindavan called Rādhā-Kuṇḍa and Kṛṣṇa-Kuṇḍa. There are two tanks; I have seen them. It appears that no water moves from one tank to the other. One cannot make out from which tank to which tank the water is moving. There is a little passage of movement of water from one tank to the other.

Likewise is this devotion in its heightened form of *Mādhurya Bhāva*, Who loves whom? You cannot find out. When this *Mādhurya Bhāva* is taken to the apex of perfection, is God loving you or are you loving God? Can you understand what it is when God loves you? When you love God, it is called *Bhakti*. When God loves you, what is it called? There have been great masters who compelled God to love them. That is a greater devotion than your loving God.



Hypocrites who make a show of spirituality to garner temporary prestige are foolish, for they forfeit the eternal, all-redeeming blessings of God, even by a true heart's prorate romance with the divine.

In all man's pursuits he is seeking the fulfilment of love and joy. The motive behind the evil ways of even the utmost sinner is that he expects to attain therefrom something that will lead to happiness. God is that happiness. But the urge to see Him is drowned in the urge to indulge in sense-pleasures. When that sensory compulsions disappears, then the craving for God automatically appears.

Arjuna as a Bhakta: A Role Model

—Dr. Sudesh Chander Sharma

Ādi Śaṅkara had said that ‘*Jantūnām narajanma durlabham.*’ Only human beings are bestowed with the capacity to discriminate between the good and the evil due to their power of intelligence. It is true that total renunciation of contact with the opposite sex and wealth is difficult yet scriptures do instruct and lay emphasis on the renunciation of them both, in order to get liberated from cycles of life and death i.e., to attain *Mokṣa*.

Arjuna, a devotee and friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the protagonist of the ancient Indian epic *Mahābhārata*. He was so close to Lord Kṛṣṇa, that Yogeśwara accepted to be his charioteer and made possible the scripting of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. Arjuna was the son of Indra, born of Kuntī, the first wife of King Pāṇḍu in the Kuru Kingdom. In a previous birth he was a sage named Nara who was the lifelong companion of another sage *Nārāyaṇa* an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu who took rebirth as Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although there are innumerable qualities of Arjuna that make him great character for all, yet I will share two instances encountered by Arjuna worth understanding for one’s benefit.

Urvaśī’s curse:

Acting on to the advice of sage Veda Vyāsa, Yudhiṣṭhira sent him to Indraloka to have blessing of Lord Indra for learning divine weapons and music before *Dharma Yuddha*. Indra disguised as an ascetic sent fairest of faire Urvaśī to attend to Arjuna in order to check his celibacy during

his stay over there. She was enamoured by the charming and heroic personality of Arjuna. Lord Indra noted the passionate glances exchanged of Urvaśī towards Arjuna during his stay. However, Arjuna refused her advances, alleging that he had heard of her relationship with his ancestor Purūravā and hence she had the status of a mother, equal in respect to his mother Kuntī. He bent to touch her feet out of respect. Urvaśī got annoyed and stunned at this and cursed him so that he would become a eunuch who would have to live among women, singing and dancing. Lord Indra was overwhelmed to watch Arjuna's wisdom and character. On Indra's request, she regretting her anger reduced her curse to a period of one year. This curse proved to be an asset to Arjuna during *Pāṇḍavas* incognito living.

As a teacher to Uttarā:

Arjuna was in disguise as Vṛhannalā as the charioteer of Uttara, son of King of Virata Nagar. Duryodhana along with other warriors of *Kauravas* like Bhīṣma, Karṇa and others invaded kingdom of King Virāṭa and abducted their cows and started moving the herd to their own kingdom. The son of king Virāṭa could not do anything. Then Arjuna began fighting and managed to defeat them all and got control of the cows. After this episode King Virāṭa got very happy with his son, however his son told him that it was Vṛhannalā who did this heroic deed. When the remaining period of being incognito was over, the *Pāṇḍavas* revealed their identity to King Virāṭa. He desired her daughter should marry Arjuna. Arjuna rejected the offer as Uttarā had been learning dance and music from Vṛhannalā. Arjuna replied that he had always considered King Virāṭa's daughter as his own. Moreover, she had also looked upon him as her teacher only. These pious thoughts of Arjuna got praise from everyone. Hence it was not

possible for Arjuna to marry princess Uttarā. However, she could become my daughter-in-law by marrying Abhimanyu. It was remarkable self-control and unstained character of Arjuna that has become an exemplary quality worth following by all.



Don't get worried for this that 'what we are', whatever we are, we are God's. Whatever God is, He is our own. His divine grace would make us worthy for giving love to Him.

—*Swami Sharanananda*

A religion does not teach us to fight with others. The first principle of every religion is to know and feel God's presence everywhere.

—*Swami Rama Tirtha*

He is born in vain, who, having attained the human birth, so difficult to get, does not attempt to realize God in this very life.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Read and Digest

Man can be whatever he wants to be. Awake! Realize your divinity.

* * *

Example is the best teacher.

* * *

Even if all the other senses have been conquered, but the tongue is not conquered, then that person is not a self-conquered person.

* * *

Obedience is better than reverence.

* * *

Make your life a mass of divine radiance—‘*Tamaso mā Jyotirgamaya.*’

* * *

Live truth in thought, word and deed.

* * *

God alone is sufficient, for in Him lies all love, all life, all happiness, all joy, all peace—everything that even in your wildest dreams you could not imagine. Cultivate a friendship with Him.

* * *

All the goodness and purity of God, is within you.

* * *

Neither good fortune nor evil fortune is real. God alone is real.

* * *

Only he is wise who lives in constant remembrance of God.

* * *

Evil promises happiness and gives sorrow.

Rāma Rāva, A Beneficent Boy

The boy named Rāma Rāva was a member of the fifteenth Scout army of Bangalore. He was ten years old. One day he was standing on the bank of a river. A fifteen year old girl, belonging to the Devānga caste, was washing clothes there. While she was washing clothes, her foot slipped and she was going to be drowned in deep river. The boy named Rāma Rāva, without putting off his clothes, jumped into the river. He reached the girl in no time.

Rāma Rāva caught the drowning girl but his task was very tedious because the water was covered with moss and the girl was too heavy to be pulled by him. Moreover, his wet clothes were also causing an obstacle to him and thus he could not swim easily. Even then that daring and courageous boy remained busy with his task. He pulled the girl forcefully to the bank, though he himself was badly tired and while saving her, there was also the risk of his being drowned in the river. But staking his own life, he saved the life of the drowning girl.



Relish in divine name, compassion on all beings and association with saints—O *Sanātana*! I know nothing else except these three.

—*Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*

Lord comes to Kabīra

—*Nabaji Siddha*

Meanwhile, the illusory fakir reaching Kabīra's house and showing the silk-piece to Jijābībī began thus, "O noble woman! Listen to the odd behaviour of your son in the market. Instead of selling the cloth, he was forcing it on a Brahmin as charity. When I asked him to give me the cloth, he tore it into two and gave one half to the Brahmin and the other to me. He also advised me to come to you for a bigger piece. He told me to act as if I am here on my own. If he accompanied me, you would think that he brought me to you. Wishing his role in this to be kept secret, he is waiting for me in the ramshackle house. O great woman, how fortunate you are to beget such a child with a kind disposition. Though very young, he is noble-hearted. O mother, will you give me a bigger cloth and alleviate my poverty?"

Jijābībī said grimly, "O fakir, I will certainly meet your need of a cloth. But, first show me Kabīra's hiding place." The shrewd fakir led her to the rundown house, where the boy was absorbed in prayer.

The fakir said, "O mother! Look there, on seeing you enter the house, he has closed his eyes. Though a young boy, he is very clever. He may bolt away through the other door. I will stand guard at the rear. You go through the entrance and catch hold of him."

The fakir's behaviour was like running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. He went to Kabīra and said, "Hey, your mother is here. Make your escape through the back door."

Kabīra took one look at his mother who was approaching him in wild fury and jumped up in great terror and dashed across the room to the back door. Immediately, the fakir had him in his grip. Catching him by his long hair with one hand, he knocked him hard with the other hand, at the same time shouting, “O mother, catch him. He is trying to run away.”

Kabīra implored the priest, “It does not behove you to play this double role. Please let me get away before my mother reaches me.”

“Oh, rogue! Am I going to let you get off that easily? O mother, please hurry up.”

Seizing him by hand, Jijābībī roared in anger, “O scoundrel, how dare you give away the cloth?” When she began to hit him, the fakir aided her by giving her a cane to belabour him hard. Just as she raised her hand with all her pent up anger, Kabīra—who in his previous life as Śuka, was in such a complete identity with all beings in the universe that the entire creation replied, ‘yes, yes’ to the call of his father Vyāsa—wailed in terror of pain uttering, ‘Rāma Rāma.’

Before another blow could land on his back, lo, the fakira, assuming His divine form, averted the blow and let it land on His back. He embraced Kabīra lovingly with consoling words. As if by a magic spell, Jijābībī’s heart mellowed suddenly. She was overwhelmed by deep remorse at ill-treating her own son. Again, looking at the charming appearance of the Lord, her head reeled and she stood frozen.

The Lord started wondering to himself, “Oh, I ended up as gatekeeper at *Mahabālī*’s palace when I went to trick him! Then, I turned into a child in the hands of Anasūyā, when I went to test her chastity. I got trapped in stranger

situations when I befriended the *Pāṇḍavas*. I had to become their charioteer and what not! I had to undergo many trials Myself. But, never did I, in the past, have to bear such heavy blows as on this occasion nor did My deceptive play fall away, exposing My divine form as on this occasion! How terribly painful it would have been for the poor boy, if I had not intervened and received this thrashing!”

Turning to Kabīra, he said, “O crown-jewel of my devotees, my dearest, did it hurt you much? Driven by fear and pain, how desperately you called out My name, dear child! How narrowly you escaped the deadly blows.”

While the deceitful Lord was consoling Kabīra with heart-warming words, Jijābībī bowed at His feet and said, “O Lord! Some, giving up their sleep and food, engage in severe penance to have Your vision. Some, renouncing pleasures of the world, constantly chant Your name with love and yearn to see You. There are others who, rending the veil of *Māyā* that clouds higher vision, spend their lives wandering all over, singing Your praises and fall down fatigued without getting Your *Darśana*. There are yet others who search out saints, serve them, listen to their litanies of the Lord, aspiring for a glimpse of You. In spite of their travails, they remain deprived of Your favour.”

“O Supreme Being! Lotus-eyed One! You are not keen to bestow Your favours on those who have renounced the householder’s life, taken to the ascetic way of hardship and rigours of *Yoga*. You overlook those who are lost in ecstasy at the mere thought of You and dance in bliss. You pay no attention to those who long for You with agony in their hearts. You are indifferent to the appeals of *Jñānīs* who even after attaining the highest Brahman, long for your intimacy. Yet; You have deigned to give me Your vision, who has done none of these.

“O Lord of lords! You are the essence of all the scriptures. The holy Feet in Mecca are verily Yours! These are the same blessed feet that You placed on King Vali’s head! Am I beholding those Divine Feet, which measured the universe in three strides? O Refuge of the weak, Lord of the universe, O merciful-One, son of Daśaratha, Slayer of Rāvaṇa, Hero among heroes how merciful of you to grant me Your Divine vision!”

The Lord looking at her lovingly said, “O noble woman! Whom do you take this boy for, who fled from you in fear and who caused Me to bear these whiplashes on my back? Understand that this boy who is as dear to Me as My eyes, who holds Me in his heart always, who excels Me, is indeed a *Brahmarṣi*. If you have any doubt, see if your blows have left any mark on his back. Then look at my back also.”

Jijābībī finding no trace on Kabīra’s back, looked at the Lord’s back where she saw the slash marks. Trembling at the sight, she fainted. When she regained her senses, she wailed in remorse, “Oh! I am an accursed one! I have dared to hurt the Divine Lord who was impregnable against the powerful Hiraṇyākṣa, who was unassailed by the mighty weapons of Rāvaṇa and the fierce missiles of Indrajit. My sins are going to visit my descendants. O Lord of *Vaikunṭha*! How am I going to make amends?” Once again crushed by sorrow, she banged her head on the floor and collapsed.

Nābājī continued, “O Siddhas, listen attentively to the captivating acts of the Lord! The Lord tenderly took her prostrate form in His divine arms and showering torrents of compassion on her, said, “O fortunate woman! O blemishless mother, how can you attempt to kill yourself like this? As you are purity-personified, I put my beloved

charge in your care; I made mother's milk flow in your breast to feed him; and by accepting the blows on my back I proved to you that Kabīra and I are not different. Thus I uplifted you along with your husband. From this day, look after this pure child with great care and love. You will reach my Abode at the end of this life and dwell in transcendental bliss."

Turning to Kabīra, the Lord said, "My beloved, fragrant child! Don't be annoyed with Me and rebuke Me for having disturbed your contemplation and caused you to be battered by your mother! Don't tie me up like Sahadeva or reject me like Aravan or curse Me like the sage Bhṛgu!"

Entranced by the sweet words of the Lord, tender emotion welling up in his heart, Kabīra fell at the Lord's feet and said, "You were so merciful as to appear to me disguised as a fakir to bear the assault, embrace me and caress me with Your loving hands. O Lord! Unaware of Your guise, I hurled abuses at You, called You a beggar and got You beaten also. Please look upon my offences as penance and bestow Your grace on me. O Beloved of the *Brahmajñānīs*! O Playful One! Lover of butter, Friend of the cowherds, Darling of Kauśalyā!" Thus Kabīra adored the Lord in many words and becoming ecstatic, jumped, danced and bowed to Him again and again.



O' Pride! Leave Me Alone

—*Dr. Suresh Chandra Pande*

O' Pride! You are wicked in plenty
A spawn of egotism and vanity
You and you alone
Have given me pain to moan
Ample of groan and bemoan.

Your protean form is verily a cheater
A shark, charlatan and a trickster
I know not how did
You, dawned to bid
Into this vast world and wide.

O' Pride! I see your haughty demeanour
Wearing a fast-pacing undaunted glamour
Underneath the mask of a glorious hermit
Your holy vestals exhibit a scrupulous culprit
In an age of innate ideas and of spirit.

Disguised as organizational power-wielder
Never self-same divinity did you let prosper
Ensconed on lofty chair covertly to relax
Your rule and the executive promote a lax
Neither calm nor quiet utterly a hex.

O' Pride! You always keep me busy
In vain arguments, in opinions tizzy
God's being, scripture's import
In disagreements of various sorts
Lots of megabucks wad your resort.

Denying the nectar of devotion to my lips
 Concocted mixture is offered in sips
 To disregard parents and teachers alike
 Despise one and all in literal dislike
 It's your real plight and virtual like.

O' Pride! You are an imposter
 If truth be told a misnomer
 Making false love you do rob
 Young-maiden's chaste bob
 For flawless crop sure you pop.

You and you alone have affianced me to sin
 Rectitude that no more now can I win
 Feel shy in chanting, balk in listening
 Holy heroic tales of Almighty, glistening
 All around the globe in heavens lightening.

Get you away impious pride
 You have ferried me many a tide
 Trailed my footfalls for ages past
 Into the world too wide and vast
 Leave me now O' Pride! quit
 And let me have vision Divine..... !



Perfection of Soul

—*Swami Vivekananda*

There are good and evil everywhere in this world. Sometimes evil becomes good, true; but other times good becomes evil also. All our senses produce evil sometime or other. Let a man drink wine. It is not bad at first, but let him go on drinking, and it will produce evil.... A man is born of rich parents; good enough. He becomes a fool, never exercises his body or brain. That is good producing evil. Think of this love of life. We go away and jump about and live a few moments; we work hard. We are born babies, entirely incapable. It takes us years to understand things again. At sixty or seventy we open our eyes and then comes the word. "Get out!" And there you are.

We have seen that good and evil are relative terms. The thing that is good for me is bad for you. If you eat the dinner that I eat, you will begin to weep and I shall laugh.... We may both dance, but I with joy and you with pain.... The same thing is good at one part of our life and bad at another part. How can you say that good and evil are all cut and dried—that this is all good and that is all evil?

Now, who is responsible for all this good and evil, if God is ever the good? The Christians and the Mohammedans say there is a gentleman called Satan. How can you say there are two gentlemen working? There must be one.... The fire that burns the child also cooks the meal. How can you call the fire good or bad and how can you say it was created by two different persons? Who creates all so-called

evil? God. There is no other way out. He sends death and life, plague and epidemics and everything. If such is God, He is the good; He is the evil; He is the beautiful; He is the terrible; He is life; and He is death.

How can such a God be worshipped? We shall come to understand how the soul can really learn to worship the terrible; then that soul will have peace.....Have you peace? Do you get rid of anxieties? Turn around, first of all and face the terrible. Tear aside the mask and find the same God. He is the personal—all that is apparently good and all that is apparently bad. There is none else. If there were two Gods, nature could not stand a moment. There is not another one in nature. It is all harmony. If God played one side and the devil the other, the whole of nature would be in chaos. Who can break the law? If I break this glass, it will fall down. If anyone succeeds in throwing one atom out of place, every other atom will go out of balance..... The law can never be broken. Each atom is kept in its place. Each is weighed, measured and fulfils its purpose and place. Through His command the winds blow, the sun shines. Through His rule the worlds are kept in place. Through His orders death is sporting upon the earth. Just think of two or three Gods having a wrestling match in this world! It cannot be.

We now come to see that we can have the Personal God, the creator of this universe, who is merciful and also cruel.He is the good, He is the evil. He smiles and He frowns. And none can go beyond His law. He is the creator of this universe.

What is meant by creation, something coming out of nothing? Six thousand years ago God woke up from His dream and created the world and before that there was nothing? What was God doing then, taking a good nap?

God is the cause of the universe and we can know the cause through the effect. If the effect is not present, the cause is not the cause. The cause is always known in and through the effect.....Creation is infinite.....You cannot think of the beginning in time or in space.

Why does He create it? Because He likes to; because He is free.....You and I are bound by law, because we can work only in certain ways and not in others. “Without hands, He can grasp everything. Without feet, He moves fast.” Without body, He is omnipotent. “Whom no eyes can see, but who is the cause of sight in every eye, know Him to be the Lord.” You cannot worship anything else. God is the omnipotent supporter of this universe. What is called “law” is the manifestation of His will. He rules the universe by His laws.

So far we have discussed God and nature, eternal God and eternal nature. What about souls? They also are eternal. No soul was ever created; neither can the soul die. Nobody can even imagine his own death. The soul is infinite, eternal. How can it die? It changes bodies. As a man takes off his old, worn-out garments and puts on new and fresh ones, even so the worn-out body is thrown away and a fresh body is taken.

What is the nature of the soul? The soul is also omnipotent and omnipresent. Spirit has neither length, nor breadth, nor thickness.....How can it be said to be here and there? This body falls; the soul works through another body. The soul is a circle of which the circumference is nowhere but the centre is in the body. God is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is everywhere. The soul by its very nature is blessed, pure and perfect; it could never be pure if its nature was impure....The soul’s nature is purity; that is why souls can

become pure. It is blessed by nature; that is why it can become blessed. It is peace; that is why it can become peaceful.....

All of us who find ourselves in this plane, attracted to the body, work hard for a living, with jealousies and quarrels and hardships and then death. That shows we are not what we should be. We are not free, perfectly pure and so on. The soul, as it were, has become degraded. Then what the soul requires is expansion.

How can you do it? Can you work it out yourself? No. If a man's face is dusty, can you wash it out with dust? If I put a seed in the ground, the seed produces a tree, the tree produces a seed, the seed another tree, etc. Hen and egg, egg and hen. If you do something good, you will have to reap the result of that, be born again and be sorry. Once started in this infinite chain, you cannot stop. You go on,up and down, to heavens and earths and all these bodies....There is no way out.

Then how can you get out of all this and what are you here for? One idea is to get rid of misery. We are all struggling day and night to get rid of misery....We cannot do it by work. Work will produce more work. It is only possible if there is someone who is free himself and lends us a hand. "Hear, ye children of immortality, all those that reside in this plane and all those that reside in the heavens above, I have found the secret," says the great sage. "I have found Him who is beyond all darkness. Through His mercy alone we cross this ocean of life."

In India, the idea of the goal is this: There are heavens, there are hells, there are earths, but they are not permanent. If I am sent to hell, it is not permanent. The same struggle goes on and on wherever I am. How to get beyond all this struggle is the problem. If I go to heaven, perhaps there

will be a little bit of rest. If I get punished for my misdeeds, that cannot last forever either.....The Indian ideal is not to go to heaven. Get out of this earth, get out of hell and get out of heaven! What is the goal? It is freedom. You must all be free. The glory of the soul is covered up. It has to be uncovered again. The soul exists. It is everywhere. Where shall it go?.....Where can it go? It can only go where it is not. If you understand that it is ever present,.....there will be perfect happiness forever afterwards. No more births and deaths.....No more disease, no body. The body itself is the biggest disease.....

The soul shall stand as soul. Spirit shall live as spirit. How is this to be done? By worshipping the Lord in the soul, who, by his very nature is ever present, pure and perfect. There cannot be two almighty beings in this world. Imagine having two or three Gods; one will create the world, another says, "I will destroy the world." It can never happen. There must be one God. The soul attains to perfection; it becomes almost omnipotent and omniscient. This is the worshipper. Who is the worshipped? He, the Lord God Himself, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient and so on. And above all, He is Love. How is the soul to attain this perfection? By worship.



Real love is there only when the lover has not the sense of being the lover in himself. Lover has no egoistic sense in himself.

—Swami Sharanananda

Methods of Mind-Control

—*Sree Rama Devi*

The repetition of the Divine Name and the practice of meditation bring about an orientation of the inherited propensities of your mind. They elevate your mind from the world of senses to the sanctifying realm of Divine Consciousness.

God's Name is omnipotent, because the Name is inseparable from the Deity which it signifies. It is the verbal expression of the Supreme Silence, the word symbol of ineffable Brahman which is beyond the concepts of both 'Saguna' and 'Nirguna.' The mind which has discarded the sense pleasure, finds an indescribable charm, nectarean sweetness and intense joy in the repetition of the Lord's Name. The melodious music of the name soothes the nervous, harmonises the senses, composes the mind and thrills every fibre of your being. Name itself serves as a life-giving tonic and makes the mind strong, steady and concentrated in Truth. Your intellect will blossom and the discriminating power will dawn by which you will get a power of inward detachment to feel yourself as separate from the mind. Name is the path-finder, the path, as well as the goal. It is said to be the goal itself, because in the final stage of spiritual development the votary of the Name experiences such a love for the Name that he finds even the four beatitudes as trivial before the bliss of the Name. God's Name is the raft by which numerous souls have crossed the ocean of mundane existence.

The repetition of the Name, performed either consciously

or unconsciously, with knowledge of its significance or without it, yields result. But quicker is your progress on the path to perfection if you repeat it with love for the Divine, with concentration of your mind and with an awareness that your own Higher Self is identical with the Deity whose presence you try to invoke through repetition.

You should make a conscious effort to make your mind free of thoughts, as you repeat the Divine Name and practise concentration on the space between the eyebrows, observe your thought-waves as a detached witness and negate them as unreal. As you go on negating each thought, you will find yourself going deeper in meditation. Intense feeling that you are the Pure Awareness itself, will bring about detachment, which is absolutely necessary for the control of mental activity. With awakened discrimination, you can analyse your own mental activity. You will gain an introspective vision to study the nature of evil passions like anger, greed, infatuation, lust, jealousy etc., if you keep yourself in the position of a witness.

Discrimination would be applied not only in the external world but also in the inner world of thought. You should be extremely vigilant in the observation of your thoughts. Thoughts are waiting to rush in. It is comparatively easy to exercise control over the thoughts that have come up to the surface of your mind. But beneath the surface consciousness there are subtle thoughts which will escape your notice unless you keep a careful guard over them. Try to count the number of thoughts. That will enable you to make your observation keener.

Methods adopted to concentrate thoughts and to control the mind vary according to the temperamental conditions of the aspirants. Every method, if properly employed, paves the way to success, provided the seeker sticks to the path

which he has chosen.

Before commencing your meditations, provide the mind with a *Sāttwika* environment. If *Tāmasika* inertia is overpowering it, you should make the mind active by engaging it in the reflection of what you have heard from Mother, *Guru*, regarding the truth of your real nature. You will not get success in meditation when the mind is extremely restless under the impact of *Rājasika* impulses. So accept and make use of everything that helps you to develop a *Sāttwika* mood.

Select a convenient place which will give you necessary seclusion for the purpose of your daily meditation. If that is not possible, try to secure seclusion in the quiet of your mind. Set up a small shrine in your house and keep it always neat and tidy. Consecrate it by your exalted devotion. Invoke the presence of the Deity through worship and incantations. You must have the feeling that your Deity of worship is always present there and that the shrine which you have set up for the Deity is the holiest of all Shrines in the world. See the shrine as the symbol of your holy heart where dwells the Supreme Being in the form of your own radiant Self. If you continue to meditate and worship in that shrine with regularity, you will, in course of time, experience a greater manifestation of Divine presence there.

In the early hours of the dawn, if a bath is not possible, at least wash your face and feet with cold water and sit for meditation. Offer your salutations and prayers to your *Guru*. Feel that your soul is open to the dynamic influence of all the holy vibrations that come to you from all over the world. Know well that your, God, chosen Deity and your Self are one and the same.

Assert with all the force at your command that the

Infinite alone is and that the mind and its creation are unreal. When your feeling becomes intense, you feel that thoughts can never arise unless you allow them to appear. Another method is to watch the source of thoughts. Catch hold of the thought "I" around which all other thoughts revolve as it were and pursue the quest of the true "I" with undivided attention. You can employ any of the aforesaid methods which suits you best, which brings success in your concentration. After initiation into the inner discipline of higher meditations upon the meaning of the *Mahavakia* by Mother, the path will become clear and the meditation will become pleasant and exhilarating to you. Till that time, you can continue your practice as mentioned above.

The real, uninterrupted quest of Self or spiritual contemplation is possible only when your thoughts subside. So the first part of *Sādhanā* is to assert mastery over the thoughts of the lower mind.

To enter into the peace of meditation, the vagaries of the mind should vanish. The tempo of sensuous activity makes a retreat into the silent depth of the soul practically impossible. Hence those who are intent upon the Infinite, should first create a condition within their own minds where the interest of the personal self does not become a cause for too much of distractions. In the conquest of passion and detachment from desire alone is visible the path to supreme Peace of the Self.

Too much of mental distractions during the temporal activity constitutes a hindrance to meditation. Therefore you should try to perform your actions in a reflective mood of detachment. By practice detachment will come the serenity, that is absolutely essential for higher meditations. Look upon yourself as the Spirit beyond the body and observe the bodily movements as you observe other objects

of the world. If you give yourself to meditation on oneness of existence with open eyes during the time of your activity, your mind will easily assume a meditative mood the very moment, you enter the shrine for your meditation. When the mind rises to the higher stage of Purity, its natural inclination will be towards meditation.

By protracted practice of banishing thoughts from the mind, a state of blankness will ensue. That is not the end of *Sādhanā*. The mind must be filled with Pure Consciousness. That is not a state of void. That will be on the contrary an effulgent Fullness. Mother has told you this even now, in the very beginning of your *Sādhanā*, so that you may have an idea as to what should be the goal you aim at.

Perfection should be your aim and not mere salvation after death. You should realize the Absolute in the embodied existence itself and experience the freedom of your soul. Salvation after death is like ascending the royal throne after all the subjects have perished in the battle. You should be the mind and senses constitute the subjects. When they are all active, you should be seated on throne of your Perfection as the Divine Self.

Realization is not an egoistic attainment. It is the experience of the ever-existent Reality through grace of God. *Sādhanā* is for purification only. The unyielding *Sādhanā* has made Realization the sweetest of all experiences. If there was no sense of bondage and consequently no effort for liberation, how can one enjoy the sweetness and greatness of Emancipation?

Perform all your office duties in a spirit of detachment and resignation. Reverence and obedience which you show towards your superiors should be from understanding and not from fear. The more you respect your superior officers, the greater is the elevation of your soul, because the Self

in them is your own Self. The humbler you become, the greater will be the respect you command. Humility is born of wisdom and strength and not of ignorance and weakness. Humility will not take away your self-respect. The highest self-respect you can command when you abide as the glorious Self of all. He who abides as the Self of all, will be the servant of all as well as the master of all in one.

Until your mind is fully possessed by God, you have duties to discharge. Duty is not a monster to be afraid of. Duty never brings to you the sense of bondage. Approach duty with a free spirit. Let it be a pleasure to you. For him who recognizes none but the Absolute not reasoning but by actual inward vision and experience, there is no family, no home, no country, no duty. He who has the direct experience of the Absolute, has become already the Absolute.

Sender—*Deepak Patel*



It is the sick in the body who need the aid of a doctor, not those who are physically well. The same holds true for spiritually stricken souls. I love to be welcomed into their midst because their need mental, moral and spiritual divine healing, through the godly life manifesting through me.

—*Jesus Christ*

The Purpose of Life

—Ravi Sharma

What is the true purpose of life? This question is at the very core of the humanity. There is no easy answer to this question. In fact, the question has been an enigma since the dawn of civilization. It remained an esoteric feature of human race despite our religious scriptures delineated comprehensively on the issue and tried to answer this question in a quite vehement and convincing manner. Practically speaking, there cannot be final words on this subject, because only the creator of the universe could tell us exactly, what is His purpose of creating this whole and vast universe or sending the human beings on this earth planet? So different people gave their own opinions and views based probably on the weal and goodness aspects of the society and the process or the search to find out the exact purpose of life is still perhaps on. And I would like to divide this issue into two parts.

Spiritual purpose—

When we talk of spiritual purpose of life, this covers question like why God created this whole universe. We are told by many preachers and spiritual *Gurus* that the chief purpose of human life is to find out God, connect with God, to remember Him and also chant His name. We need to involve ourselves in spiritual congregations and discourses so as to devote maximum time in the prayer of Almighty so that one could get salvation in this life. This is the only purpose of our existence on this earth planet. Only by involving oneself in godly activities that

one could get oneself retrieved from the cycle of birth and death. And in order to bring home their point, they quote and refer to several verses from the religious scriptures. There are people who attain a level of spiritual elevation and awakening about Almighty (God) and they intend to impart this knowledge to larger number of people and thus, for them spreading this awareness and awakening becomes a purpose of their life. For some, touching the lives of other human beings by helping them in whatever manner, are their purpose of life. There are people who are working for the betterment of society and rendering yeoman service and contributing their mite towards the upliftment and welfare of poor, needy and downtrodden becomes the purpose of their life. And by involving themselves in the prayers of Almighty, they intend to lead a life of a higher plane by rising above the baser instincts, having complete control over their mind. Such people consciously perform godly activities in their daily routine chores.

Mundane purpose—

Whatever we discuss apart from having some higher purpose of life, we decide everything from the mundane point of view. Yes, majority of people have a purpose of life to meet or arrange both ends meals and they are not at all concerned with what is the higher purpose of life propounded by spirituality. Therefore, what I feel personally is that the purpose of life varies from individual to individual according to their needs, interests, hobbies, bend of mind, their level of education and elevation. There are people who intend to serve the society by engaging themselves in some social work either independently or by joining some organization doing social and charitable work. There are people who involve themselves in their daily routine work wholeheartedly considering “Work is worship”

as their motto of life.

For some, earning enough money and become millionaire is their aim of life. To achieve happiness, name and fame in life is aim of many others. As regards, mundane purpose of life, we find that these purposes are set according to people's own choice, depending on their requirement, needs, basic education and level of elevation etc. It might also depend about one's calling or you could say their inner push to achieve anything in life. And here, those who have an inner inclination towards spirituality, they are mostly found uninterested in the worldly affairs and their purpose of life becomes searching for truth in life and get themselves awakened. And the purpose of life of such people falls in the first category. Some of the purpose for people living a mundanely life could be given as under:—

To meet both ends meet. Yes this is true in majority of cases.

To aspire for happiness in life.

To nourish their children and get them established in life.

Treat "Work as Worship."

To serve the country.

To serve the society.

To serve the people by doing some yeoman service for the needy and poor.

Colleges going youth, the purpose of life may be to become Engineer, Doctor, IAS/IPS officer.

Therefore, the purpose of life varies from person to person, individual to individual, organization to organization and institution to institution. And most of the purposes as referred above, emanate from their worldly needs. However, as regards the true and higher purpose of life, people will continue to be in dilemma as only the creator knows and

could tell us Why He has sent us, human being on this earth planet. This is perhaps going to be a mystery forever, though claimed to have been unfolded by spiritual *Gurus* and preachers. Here I would like to mention that there are two category/ type of people. One who believe in the teachings of their *Gurus* or have staunch faith in their religious scriptures but on the other hand there are persons whose curiosity is not wet with the preaching imparted by various religious *Gurus*, the subject being subjective in nature, rather their curiosity to know and find God, remains there, despite they subscribing to whatever is preached to them in the name of God or Almighty.

And it is for the people falling in the latter category that the question of knowing the true and authenticated purpose of life will continue to baffle them (human race) and propel them to search and probe more and more on this issue as the man has been doing it presently.

But certainly, the life must have a purpose. Leading a purposeful and meaningful life is the best one and could in fact be construed as the purpose of life itself from the mundane point of view. Definitely life led at higher plane is far far better. While living a life at higher planes, one feels the joy and delight in doing anythings with complete satisfaction and with full confidence as well. At this stage one finds oneself raised above all baser instincts, gender differences etc. Certainly one feels life at best and one enjoys engaging in any activity with full involvement because God/Almighty (the supreme power) is there to lead human beings on the righteous and truthful path.



Be Free from Vāṇī Doṣa

—Swami Akhandananda Saraswati

A *Doṣa* (fault) is that which is harmful for ourselves and for others. Whichever emotion, action or speech takes us away from our real nature, is a *Doṣa*. The farther it carries us away, the greater the *Doṣa*; which means that the fault is a major one if it keeps us engrossed in objects, memories or reflections upon whatever is farthest from our *Ātmā*. When our speech is far removed from the truth, it is a *Doṣa* and the closer we are to the *Ātmā*, the greater the *Guṇa* (good quality) in us. The problem is that we do not know the truth. We believe that which we like, to be the truth. We love our relative. We love, not the Truth, but ourselves.

Actually, the greatest misfortune in our lives is that we have no real love for the Truth. If we loved the Truth, we'd think deeply, before declaring the world to be Reality or Illusion. If we loved the Truth, we'd think about the reality of the Creator. If we loved the Truth, we'd decide to speak only the truth and then ponder upon what the truth is. Is it what I speak or is it something else? My brother, a lawyer will speak only that truth which is in favour of his client. He will not speak the whole truth. So, all the sects are lawyer's sects, speaking in favour of their clients. Just as politicians speak in favour of their parties; they are their party's lawyers. Carāṇa Siṁgha, Morārajī, Vājapeyī, all need to argue in favour of their own groups. All these people have studied the art of arguing in favour of their own groups.

Now examine the *Vānī Doṣa*. There should be no foolishness in the seeking of the Truth. When Truth and foolishness mingle, Truth is hidden and foolishness remains. So, we should be careful that the Truth is not made into an inanimate object. It is written in the *Upaniṣad*:

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा
सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम्।

(*Muṇḍakopaniṣad* III. 1. 5)

Here Śrī Śaṅkarācārya *Mahārāja* has told us to give up speaking untruths. Which means that we should give up whatever seems untrue to us. We cannot see the truth, nor can we experience it, but we do know what is untrue. So, abandon whatever appears to be untrue. “*Satyē’na labhyastapasā hye’ṣa Ātmā*”—if you need to practice asceticism for this, do so. Further, when you speak the Truth, refrain from speaking a truth which is hurtful to others or harms them in anyway. It is written in the grammar book—“*Na kānam kāna iti bruyāt*”—We should not call a *Kāna* (squint-eyed person), a *Kāna* (even though it is true), we should call him “*e’kātmadarśī*” (the one who perceives one *Ātmā* in all). Similarly, we should not call a blind man, “*Andhā,*” we should call him “*Sūradāsa*” (the great devotee who was blind). Or if we wish to show him great respect, we should call him “*Prajñācakṣu.*” *Prajñācakṣu* also means blind and it also means, “the one who sees with the intellect.” This way, they feel that they have been shown due consideration. In the same way, if an unmarried girl becomes pregnant, we should not call out to her and scold her on the roadside, however true it may be. Manujī has dictated:

सत्यं ब्रूयात्प्रियं ब्रूयान्न ब्रूयात्सत्यमप्रियम्।
प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयादेष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

Speak the Truth and speak endearingly; not like the Sadhu who went to someone's house and called out, "Hey, you old hag, where is your husband?" The old woman got angry that he called her an old hag. Endearing truth should be spoken, not hurtful truth nor should sweet lies be told. This is the *Sanātana Dharma* (Eternal Righteousness).

Atyam hitam mitam brūyad avisamvādi pe'salam.

Our speech should contain that truth which is beneficial for others, as well as for ourselves. It should be spoken in brief. Furthermore, if there has been a death in someone's house or abroad, there is no need to run round informing everybody at once. Wait a while till they complete their chores and meals and then tell them. It is not proper to be in a hurry to spread bad news. But good news should be spread with all possible speed. Spreading sorrow is to be avoided, but spreading joy should be encouraged. When we speak extensively, the hidden desires of our heart are exposed. Similarly, if people gossip about their daughter or daughter-in-law, we should not start discussing our own daughter or daughter-in-law. We should listen patiently, allowing them to unburden themselves. Nor should we speak of our sorrow, when another speaks of their joy. We should never speak of death at a wedding or festival. Nor should we speak of weddings and festivals when we go to a funeral. These are all faults of speech—*Vāṇī Doṣa*.

Regarding this point, consider the incident in the *Bhāgawata*, when Nandabābā goes to meet Vasudeva. It is a joyful occasion and Vasudeva does not speak of his own sorrow. He speaks of Nandabābā's joy. Nandabābā, on the other hand, begins to console Vasudeva for his sorrow. So, our talk should be such that we are truthful, brief and speak sweet words befitting to the occasion. One *Mahātmā* told me (I have never done it, but I tell you of

it because it is a good thing; I was doing a ritual of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* in those days) that if you wish to say something, repeat it thrice in your head first, considering all aspects of harm or benefit if you utter it. Then, if you feel it is appropriate to say, only then should it be spoken.

Apart from that, if you chant the name of the Lord in your heart continuously, consider the fact that each time you speak, you will be breaking this chanting and you will speak less. This is one method of avoiding *Vāṇī Doṣa*. Continue with all your work activities and meals, all the while chanting the Lord's name silently in your heart. *Japa* (chanting) is very important. It will be curtailed by worldly talk, gossip about the home, whether it is yours or another's. Far more important than these, is the name of the Lord. And, yes! If you don't want to do *Japa*, do *Pāṭha* (chanting a passage about the Lord); any *Pāṭha* which you remember, because our tongue is such that it will not stay without speaking! If that be the case, why not use it for something good—*Japa* or *Pāṭha*?

Another *Vāṇī Doṣa* is when we are talking to one person, but speak so loudly, that a hundred or fifty people can hear us; or when we are addressing a group of twenty-five or fifty people but speak so softly that hardly anyone can hear. The volume should be in keeping with the number of people you are addressing. One thing more, the speech should not be so rapid that the listener cannot grasp what is being said. Nor should the speech be so slow that the listeners get bored. Both are faults. We should be alert when we speak.

I see people talk. I see *Mahātmās*, cultured people, *Mahārājas*. You cannot imagine how brief and disciplined their speech is. Once I was sitting with a Ṭhākura Sāheba—this incident took place some 40—42 years ago. There was

a plate before him. A man came and removed it. He understood that this is not a good man, but kept silent. When the Manager came, he told him to find where the plate was. He did not explain that the plate was kept here and had been removed by that man. He just said, "Find it." This is how cultured people speak and we should learn from them.

In one home, I saw that the child knew how to laugh, but didn't know how to cry. No one had ever cried in his presence, so how would he learn? He would just whimper a little, as he did when he was born. I saw a child who began to utter abuses and quarrel. If the mother told him not to quarrel, he'd ask her why she quarrelled with his father.

So, brother, be alert. The *Vāṇī Doṣa* is "*Samkrāmaka*" (infectious). Other Sadhus who watch me give talks, feel that they, too, will become a *Mahātmā* if they give talks. But nobody becomes a *Mahātmā* by giving talks. To be a preacher is one thing and to be a *Mahātmā* is quite another.



A devotee of God is a lover of all. His God is one. To him God is present in everything. No hatred, love and compassion alone can come from such a devotee, because he or she finds his or her divine in the hearts of all beings. That is his or her line of thinking and spiritual practice.

—Swami Ranganathananda

Dear Contributors,

Bhakti annual number of **Kalyana-Kalpataru** published last year, was well received by our kind readers. It is only due to Divine Grace and affectionate efforts of our contributors. This year we propose to publish **Welfare to All** as **annual number** in **2018**.

The whole universe which we see around us, be it human beings, animals or plants or other life forms, all are manifestations of the Supreme Divine whom we call by different names. As human beings, it is our special responsibility to protect and help every part of this beautiful creation of God.

With this view in mind **Kalyana-Kalpataru** is to publish the next **annual number** in **October 2018** on **Welfare to All**. You are requested to send your articles on any of the topics suggested below or any other topic relevant to the theme. The write-up should be concise and lucid. Typed matter should be sent to reach us before **30th June, 2018**.

1. What is real welfare
2. Why one should think of other's welfare?
3. Welfare vs. Achievement, development and growth
4. Physical vs. Spiritual welfare
5. Social vs. Individual welfare
- 6. Dimensions of welfare:**
 - (1) Spiritual Quest
 - (2) Intellectual pursuits
 - (3) Material Development
 - (4) Social Reforms
 - (5) Moral Uplift

(6) Discoveries and Innovations (7) Compassion and Empathy (8) Environmental Protection

7. Universal welfare 8. National welfare

9. Welfare of Nature—Protection and growth

10. Welfare of Humankind:

(1) Child Welfare (2) Women Welfare (3) Welfare of poor and helpless (4) Welfare of patients

11. Welfare of animals and birds

12. Welfare of Plant-life and forests

13. Helping victims of natural calamities—flood, earthquake, fire, cyclone

14. God-realization through altruistic attitude

15. Sādhanā for developing altruistic attitude

16. Welfare through positive thought, word and action

17. Shining instances of spreading welfare: Puranic characters like Rantideva and others Historical characters—

(1) Gautam Buddha (2) Mahātmā Gāndhī

(3) Florence Nightingale (4) Swāmī Rāmānujācārya

(5) Abraham Lincoln (6) Others.

Modern instances of exemplary altruistic behaviour



Science of Saṁkīrtana

God is a mystery. Mind is a mystery. The world is a mystery. How *Saṁkīrtana* transmutes human nature into divine nature, how it overhauls the old vicious *Saṁskāras*, how it changes the mental substance, how it transforms or metamorphosis the Āsuric nature into pure *Sāttvika* nature and how it brings the devotee face to face with God is also a mystery. Science and reason can hardly explain the modus operandi of *Saṁkīrtana*. Reason is an imperfect instrument. A man of weak intellect can be defeated by one who has a stronger intellect. Reason cannot explain many life problems. Intuition transcends reason but it does not contradict reason.

There is a great *Śakti* in every word. The very utterance of the word ‘hot pakouri’ brings saliva in the mouth. If you utter the word faeces when a man is taking his meals, he will immediately vomit. When such is the case with ordinary words, what to speak of the Names of God! Every Name of God is filled with various divine *Śaktis* and nectar.

—Swami Sivananda

The Glory of Divine Mother

Purāṇas are sacred scriptures through which the wise seers of ancient times have tried to give us the precious treasures of wisdom, inspiration and guidance. They are holy books into which great sages have packed in deep facts about human life and the secret of success herein and hereafter. Thus these *Purāṇas*, the holy repositories of abundance of spiritual knowledge, the sacred treasure-house of vast wealth of vital wisdom of life, have ever exerted a profound influence upon the progress and development of the glorious culture and civilisation of India. The *Purāṇas* are the framework into which have been filled the knowledge of the ways and means of conquering man's lower nature, achieving integral perfection and attaining the glorious goal of a sublime Divine Consciousness. All these they have done through the medium of didactic stories, narratives of deep esoteric significance and symbolism and rich allegory. Knowing well that basically a Hindu is religious in temperament and essentially a being of faith, these sages wove the fabric of such allegory and symbolic narrative around some popular, powerful and permanent aspect of Divinity or a great and renowned *Ṛṣi*. This Divine personality usually forms the central figure of each particular *Purāṇa*.

—*Swami Chidananda*

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